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### AN INTERESTING TRIBUTE TO THE CLASSICS

In the course of his official duties the writer had occasion to address a communication to the alumni of Evanston Academy, in which among other things he asked their opinion as to the real value their sojourn in the School had been to them in practical ways. The replies were interesting and thought-provoking. One was of especial interest to us as teachers of the Classics, because of the unusual tribute paid to them from the standpoint of their use in bread-winning.

This reply was from a woman, who after some years of married life was thrown upon her own resources with three small sons and one baby daughter. Her health was broken, and she had heavy financial responsibilities. After taking careful account of stock she decided to devote herself to stenographic work. After only three months of study she secured a place in the office of a Judge at ten dollars a week. Soon, through the educational advantages enjoyed before her marriage, rather than because of mechanical ability as a typewriter, she enjoyed a salary of twenty-five dollars a week and commanded the entire confidence of the Judge and his coworkers. To-day she enjoys a very successful business as public stenographer, and is considered one of the best in her large home city. I quote from her letter.

Though I was very young when I entered the Academy, Latin and Greek were a passion with me—a living, vital interest—and I consider that the study of those languages had been of incalculable value to me, not only then, but all my life. The beauty of Greek, its delicacy and fineness have impressed me, always—and I consider a portion of my ability in handling the English language, professionally, and my really great success as a correspondent and bread-winner to be directly attributable to the study of the Classics. The discipline, the mental training, the being able to bring to bear upon the situation all my trained mental forces were all that saved me and my family from hopelessness. Excuse the fulness of these personal allusions, but I wish you to see the importance of that early training for such uses as I never dreamed of, in my sheltered and protected home and student life. So that, could I have foreseen the future, I could have made no better or more practical preparation than that which I have so utilized in bread-winning. For illustration, the other day I handled manuscripts, letters, legal forms, etc., for nineteen men in nineteen different lines of business. My classical training helps me to hold my end of the line, though these men were all experts, each in his own special business. There is not a day that instinctively the derivation, formation and so on of a word does not come to me fully and easily through my knowledge of Greek and Latin, which has so become incorporated into my English as to color the thought and the interpretation of that English to me. I cannot see how any other branch could be so generally and practically applied through everyday life as the fine, thorough study of the so-called 'dead languages', which nevertheless are alive in every desire we breathe, in every word we speak and in all our written language.

I consider this a rather remarkable tribute and I felt that I could do some service by passing it on, to be

read to classes and to those parents who appear from time to time with such strenuous objection to the Classics because they 'are not practical'. I am more and more convinced that no studies in our school curricula can do so much for the all-around mental development and the intellectual orientation of our pupils as these much maligned languages. Let us renew the fight in their behalf with an enthusiasm born of an absolute conviction that we are right in feeling that we are teaching the subjects which are the best and the most essential.

EVANSTON ACADEMY,  
Evanston, Illinois.

NATHAN WILBUR HELM.

### THE CLASS-ROOM AND THE TELEGRAPHIC NEWS

Apropos of the parallels between Caesar's campaigns and the present war drawn in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 8.42-43, 69-70, 73, 74, 89-90, it may be worthwhile to direct attention to a few telegraphic items and newspaper notices that contain points of interest for the student of Caesar.

To the pupil struggling over the description of the hedges of the Nervii (Caesar, B.G. 2.17), the following item which appeared in the telegraphic news for August 15, may seem reminiscent:

The Belgian cavalry repeatedly charged, but owing to the conformation of the country, which is intersected with hedges and hillocks, could attack only in small groups. The Germans again and again hurled themselves at the barricades, only to be shot down by the deadly Belgian fire.

Newspapers of the same date quote a letter taken from a German prisoner in which the following statement is made:

We made a mistake in attacking the enemy in such a strong position. The attack was being made across ground full of hedges.

Several terms which formerly the student rarely found outside his text of Caesar now appear in the telegraphic news. A message from Bordeaux, dated September 19, states that

Four hostages have been given daily to answer for the security of the German troops.

Again, in a letter by Will Irwin, the well known writer, who accompanied the German army over the greater part of Belgium, this statement is made:

One thought of the days of Julius Caesar, when he read on the walls of every town that Burgomeister So-and-So and Échevins This-and-That had been seized as hostages to answer with their lives for the good behavior of the populace.

A few references to paragraphs like the foregoing may occasionally enliven an hour in a Caesar class, as well as emphasize some point in the text.

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